

FEMA's Transitional Sheltering Assistance Program Ends June 30

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GUAYNABO, Puerto Rico – Survivors of hurricanes Irma and María have until June 30 to take advantage of FEMA's Transitional Sheltering Assistance program to develop a long-term housing plan.

The program is one of several housing options being offered to eligible disaster survivors who were forced to leave homes damaged or destroyed when the storms made landfall in Puerto Rico in September. FEMA provides direct payments to hotels to temporarily shelter survivors while they seek other long-term housing solutions.

Hurricanes Irma and María, both Category 4 storms, came ashore in Puerto Rico two weeks apart, destroying the power grid and telecommunications network and uprooting thousands from their homes.

While some were able to find shelter on the island, the hurricanes' impact on existing housing stock left many with no alternative but to leave for the mainland on their own. As a result, the Transitional Sheltering Assistance program was offered to provide support to survivors needing shelter in other states.

Since the program became available, more than 19,000 individuals have sheltered at hotels in 40 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. As of May 31, the cost to FEMA is more than \$77 million.

To date, 1,979 FEMA applicants, or 5,501 household members, continue to be housed under the Transitional Sheltering Assistance program at 2,123 hotel rooms in 28 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Included in those figures are 46 Puerto Rico hotels that continue to house 605 applicants.

Overall, 7,027 households participated in the program, and 5,048 have found other housing arrangements.



FEMA is providing transportation assistance to survivors in the Transitional Sheltering Assistance program who were checked into hotels in the continental U.S. on May 3. The agency will provide direct payments to cover airline expenses for approved applicants, their household members, household pets and service animals.

July 1 is the last day for survivors to use transportation assistance to return to Puerto Rico.

Approximately 180 families have expressed interest in using transportation assistance to return home, and of those, 11 families have already returned to Puerto Rico. To be eligible for transportation back to Puerto Rico, a survivor's primary residence before the storms must have been on the island, and he or she must have been displaced from that residence.

Survivors still needing help with rental assistance, legal advice and crisis counseling are referred to the Immediate Disaster Case Management program. Case managers facilitate access to a broad range of resources.

For information on Puerto Rico's recovery from Hurricane María visit [fema.gov/disaster/4339](https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4339).

Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-FEMA (3362) 711/VRS - Video Relay Service). Multilingual operators are available. (Press 2 for Spanish). TTY call 800-462-7585.

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